



Elected officials, police chiefs on leaked Oath Keepers list



A man wearing an Oath Keepers shirt stands outside the Kenosha County Courthouse, Nov. 19, 2021 in Kenosha, Wis.

Associated Press

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Elected officials, police chiefs on leaked Oath Keepers list

By **ALANNA DURKIN RICHER**
and **MICHAEL KUNZELMAN**
Associated Press

The names of hundreds of U.S. law enforcement officers, elected officials and military members appear on the leaked membership rolls of a far-right extremist group that's accused of playing a key role in the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, according to a report released Wednesday.

The Anti-Defamation League Center on Extremism pored over more than 38,000 names on leaked Oath Keepers membership lists and identified more than 370 people it believes currently work in law enforcement agencies — including as police chiefs and sheriffs — and more than 100 people who are currently members of the military.

It also identified more than 80 people who were running for or served in public office as of early August. The membership information was compiled into a database published by the transparency collective Distributed Denial of Secrets.

The data raises fresh concerns about the presence of extremists in law enforcement and the military who are tasked with enforcing laws and protecting the U.S. It's especially problematic



Stewart Rhodes, founder of the Oath Keepers, center, speaks during a rally outside the White House in Washington, June 25, 2017.

Associated Press

for public servants to be associated with extremists at a time when lies about the 2020 election are fueling threats of violence against lawmakers and institutions.

"Even for those who claimed to have left the organization when it began to employ more aggressive tactics in 2014, it is important to remember that the Oath Keepers have espoused extremism since their founding, and this fact was not enough to deter these individuals from signing up," the report says.

Appearing in the Oath Keepers' database doesn't prove that a person was ever an active member of

the group or shares its ideology. Some people on the list contacted by The Associated Press said they were briefly members years ago and are no longer affiliated with the group. Some said they were never dues-paying members.

"Their views are far too extreme for me," said Shawn Mobley, sheriff of Otero County, Colorado. Mobley told the AP in an email that he distanced himself from the Oath Keepers years ago over concerns about its involvement in the standoff against the federal government at Bundy Ranch in Bunkerville, Nevada, among other things.

The Oath Keepers, founded in 2009 by Stewart Rhodes, is a loosely organized conspiracy theory-fueled group that recruits current and former military, police and first responders. It asks its members to vow to defend the Constitution "against all enemies, foreign and domestic," promotes the belief that the federal government is out to strip citizens of their civil liberties and paints its followers as defenders against tyranny.

More than two dozen people associated with the Oath Keepers — including Rhodes — have been charged in connec-

tion with the Jan. 6 attack. Rhodes and four other Oath Keeper members or associates are heading to trial this month on seditious conspiracy charges for what prosecutors have described as a weeklong plot to keep then-President Donald Trump in power. Rhodes and the other Oath Keepers say that they are innocent and that there was no plan to attack the Capitol.

The Oath Keepers has grown quickly along with the wider anti-government movement and used the tools of the internet to spread their message during Barack Obama's presidency, said Rachel Carroll Rivas, interim deputy director of research with the Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Project. But since Jan. 6 and Rhodes' arrest, the group has struggled to keep members, she said.

That's partly because Oath Keepers had been associated so strongly with Rhodes that the removal of the central figure had an outsized impact, and partly because many associated with the group were often those who wanted to be considered respectable in their communities, she said. "The image of being associated with Jan. 6 was too much for many of those folks," she said. □



A group of fired Starbucks employees celebrate the result of a vote to unionize one of the coffee company's locations on June 7, 2022, in Memphis, Tenn.

Associated Press

By **DEE-ANN DURBIN**
AP Business Writer

Starbucks said Wednesday it will reinstate seven employees who were fired in February after leading

an effort to unionize their Memphis store.

The seven will get their jobs back after the Seattle-based coffee giant lost an appeal of a lower court's

Starbucks loses appeal, will rehire 7 fired Memphis workers

order to reinstate them. Starbucks said the employees violated company policy by reopening the store after closing time and inviting non-employees — including a television crew — to come inside.

But the National Labor Relations Board disagreed with Starbucks' action, saying it was interfering with workers' right to organize, and it asked a federal court in Memphis to intervene. Last month, a federal judge ordered Starbucks to reinstate the workers within five days while the court considers the labor board's

lawsuit.

Starbucks appealed, but late Tuesday, a three-judge panel for the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sided with the lower court, ruling that Starbucks "did not show a likelihood of success" in challenging the lower court's ruling.

The case has been among the most closely watched in the ongoing unionization effort at Starbucks. Since late last year, more than 230 U.S. Starbucks stores — including the Memphis location — have voted to unionize. Starbucks opposes unionization.

Workers United, the union organizing Starbucks stores, celebrated the appeals court decision Wednesday. The group claims Starbucks has fired more than 100 union leaders from its stores this year.

"We hope the win helps provide the precedent for other cases like ours and helps show workers that we have the power to stand up for a better work life for ourselves and every other worker out there," said Kylie Throckmorton, one of the fired workers, in a statement distributed by the union. □

Obamas return to White House: Official portraits unveiled

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle returned to the White House on Wednesday for the unveiling of official portraits with a modern vibe: him standing expressionless against a white background and her seated on a sofa in the Red Room wearing a formal light blue dress.

"Barack and Michelle, welcome home," President Joe Biden said before he invited the Obamas to the stage to unveil the portraits. Some in the audience gasped, others applauded.

"It's great to be back," Obama said when it was his turn to speak. He praised Biden — his vice president — as someone who became a "true partner and a true friend."

The artist whom Barack Obama selected to paint his portrait says the "stripped down" style of his works helps create an "encounter" between the person in the painting and the person looking at it.

Robert McCurdy likes to present his subjects without any facial expression and standing against a white background, which is how America's 44th and first Black president will be seen here for posterity, in a black suit and gray tie.

Biden and first lady Jill Biden invited Obama and the former first lady back to their former home to unveil their official portraits. It was Mrs. Obama's first visit since her husband's presidency ended in January 2017. Obama himself visited in April to help celebrate the anniversary of the major health care law he signed. The former first lady chose artist Sharon Sprung for her portrait.

The portraits do not look like any others in the collection to which they will be added, in terms of style and substance.

McCurdy told the White House Historical Association for the latest edition of its "1600 Sessions" podcast that his style is "stripped down for a reason." He's



Former President Barack Obama and former first lady Michelle Obama react after unveiling their official White House portraits during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House, Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

also done portraits of South Africa's Nelson Mandela, Amazon's Jeff Bezos and the Dalai Lama, among others.

"They have plain white backgrounds, nobody gestures, nobody — there are no props because we're not here to tell the story of the person that's sitting for them," McCurdy said. "We're here to create an encounter between the viewer and the sitter."

He compared the technique to a session with a psychiatrist in which the patient and doctor tell each other as little as possible about themselves "so that you can project onto them."

"And we're doing the same thing with these paintings," McCurdy said. "We're telling as little about the sitter as possible so that the viewer can project onto them." McCurdy works from a photograph of his subjects, selected from hundreds of images. He spends a year to 18 months on each portrait and said he knows he's done "when it stops irritating me."

Sprung, who also was interviewed for the pod-

cast, described feeling as though she was in a "comedy sketch" when she met with the Obamas in the Oval Office.

She kept sinking into the couch she sat on while they sat on sturdier chairs. Then the president "flicked" away the printed talking points she had handed out to everyone in the room. Then she just "went still" and had to "gasp for air a little bit" when someone else in the meeting asked her why she paints. Then she started to cry.

"So who knows what put the interview over the top, but that's how it went," Sprung said.

She had planned on having Mrs. Obama stand in the portrait, "to give it a certain dignity," but said the former first lady "has so much dignity that I decided to do it sitting just because ... it was too much looking up at her. I'm that much shorter than her."

Sprung worked on the portrait for eight months, day and night, the most time she's ever spent on a single painting. She worked entirely from photographs taken in various locations

on the State Floor of the White House. Getting the dress just right was the hardest part, she said.

"The color was so beautiful and I really wanted to get the strength of the color and the light," said Sprung, who has done portraits of the late Rep. Patsy Mink, D-Hawaii, and Jeannette Rankin of Montana, the first woman elected to Congress.

Recent tradition, no matter political affiliation, has had the current president genially hosting his immediate predecessor for the unveiling — as Bill Clinton did for George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush did for Clinton and Obama did for the younger Bush.

Donald Trump, who criticized almost everything about Obama and deviated from many presidential traditions, held no ceremony for Obama. So Biden, who was Obama's vice president, scheduled one for his former boss.

Obama's portrait is destined for display in the Grand Foyer of the White House, the traditional showcase for paintings of the two most recent presidents.

Clinton's and George W. Bush's portraits currently hang there.

Mrs. Obama's portrait likely will be placed with her predecessors along the hallway on the Ground Floor of the White House, joining Barbara Bush, Hillary Clinton and Laura Bush.

Both McCurdy and Sprung said it was hard to keep their work on the portraits secret. McCurdy said it wouldn't have been a problem "if it had not gone on for so long." Sprung said she had to turn the portrait to the wall whenever someone came into her studio in New York.

The White House Historical Association, a nonprofit organization that is funded through private donations and sales of books and an annual Christmas ornament, helps manage the portrait process and, since the 1960s, has paid for most of those in the collection. Congress bought the first painting in the collection, of George Washington. Other portraits of early presidents and first ladies often came to the White House as gifts. □

California faces another day of grid-straining extreme heat

By JOHN ANTCHAK

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Operators of California's electricity grid acknowledged Wednesday that a miscommunication led to a small number of power shutoffs during a period of great strain, even as the state faced another day of extreme heat that could prompt much larger rolling blackouts.

The miscommunication occurred Tuesday afternoon between a Northern California utility and the California Independent System Operator as the grid was perilously close to running out of energy, said Elliot Mainzer, president and CEO of the CAISO.

Mainzer told a briefing he did not know specifically how the miscommunication occurred but he stressed the grid operator did not order rotating blackouts.

The CAISO was in the midst of a stage 3 alert and had ordered utilities to prepare to institute load shedding but did not proceed to the final order to do so.

Mainzer said he did not know how many customers were affected when the errant power shutoffs occurred.



Olof Wood walks across reef-like structures called microbialites, exposed by receding waters at the Great Salt Lake Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2022, near Salt Lake City.

Amid the brutal Western heat wave, peak electricity demand Tuesday hit 52,061 megawatts, far above the previous high of 50,270 megawatts set on July 24, 2006.

Mainzer said at approximately 5:45 p.m. Gov. Gavin Newsom triggered a wireless emergency alert system that sent messages to people's cellphones urging them to turn off or reduce non-essential power. "Within moments we saw a significant amount of load reduction," Mainzer said, adding that it took the state back from "the edge."

The grid will need the same

kind of response from consumers Wednesday, only earlier, he said.

Western states are struggling through one of the hottest and longest September heat waves on record. Temperatures began soaring last week and the National Weather Service warned that dangerous heat could continue through Friday, despite some slight moderation.

California's state capital of Sacramento hit an all-time high Tuesday of 116 degrees (46.7 C), breaking a 97-year-old record.

Sacramento County officials used the air-condi-

Associated Press

tioned lobbies of some of their public buildings as cooling centers for people with nowhere else to go and offering free transportation for people who could not get there. Officials even handed out motel vouchers to some homeless people through a program they normally reserve for the winter, according to county spokeswoman Janna Haynes.

"While a lot of people can stay home, a lot of people do not have a home to stay in," Haynes said.

In state office buildings, thermostats were being set at 85 degrees (29 C) at 5

p.m. to conserve electricity.

Six places in the San Francisco Bay Area and central coast set all-time record maximum temperatures, including Santa Rosa with 115 degrees F (46 C).

In neighboring Nevada, Reno's 106 F (41 C) on Tuesday was its hottest day ever recorded in September and smashed the previous record for the date, 96 F (35.5 C) in 1944. It came within 2 degrees of the all-time high for any day or month of 108 F (42 C), set in July 2002 and equaled in July 2007, according to the National Weather Service.

In Utah's Salt Lake City — a city at more than 4,000 feet (1,219 meters) elevation — temperatures were about 20 degrees higher than normal, hitting 105 F (40.5 C) on Tuesday, the hottest September day recorded going back to 1874.

Scientists say climate change has made the West warmer and drier over the last three decades and will continue to make weather more extreme and wildfires more frequent and destructive. In the last five years, California has experienced the largest and most destructive fires in state history. □



Abortion rights protesters attend a rally outside the state Capitol in Lansing, Mich., on June 24, 2022, following the United States Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade.

Associated Press

By ED WHITE

Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — A judge on Wednesday struck down Michigan's 1931 anti-abortion law, months after suspending it, the latest development over abortion rights in a state where the issue is being argued in

courtrooms and, possibly, at the ballot box.

The law, which was long dormant before the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in June, violates the Michigan Constitution, said Judge Elizabeth Gleicher.

"A law denying safe, rou-

Judge strikes down 1931 Michigan law criminalizing abortion

tine medical care not only denies women of their ability to control their bodies and their lives — it denies them of their dignity," Gleicher of the Court of Claims wrote. "Michigan's Constitution forbids this violation of due process."

The decision comes as the Michigan Supreme Court is considering whether to place a proposed amendment on the Nov. 8 ballot that would add abortion rights to the state constitution. A Friday deadline is looming.

Supporters submitted more than 700,000 signatures, easily clearing the threshold. But a tie vote by the Board of State Canvassers over spacing issues on the

petition has kept it off the ballot so far.

In the case handled by Gleicher, the 1931 law makes it a crime to perform abortions unless the life of the mother is in danger. The judge found the law "compels motherhood" and prevents a woman from determining the "shape of her present and future life."

The law "forces a pregnant woman to forgo her reproductive choices and to instead serve as 'an involuntary vessel entitled to no more respect than other forms of collectively owned property,'" Gleicher wrote, quoting constitutional scholar Laurence Tribe. She suspended the law in May

with an injunction. Her latest decision applies to all state and local prosecutors in Michigan. The Republican-controlled House and Senate can appeal the ruling, which came in a lawsuit from Planned Parenthood.

Gleicher acknowledged in July that she has been a regular donor to the organization and gave \$1,000 to the campaigns of Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Attorney General Dana Nessel, both Democrats who support abortion rights. But that support wasn't a reason to pass the case to another judge, said Gleicher, who also serves as chief judge on the Michigan Court of Appeals. □

Shift in war's front seen as grain leaves Ukraine; plant hit

By SUSIE BLANN

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Six more ships carrying agricultural cargo held up by the war in Ukraine received authorization Sunday to leave the country's Black Sea coast as analysts warned that Russia was moving troops and equipment in the direction of the southern port cities to stave off a Ukrainian counteroffensive. Ukraine and Russia also accused each other of shelling Europe's largest nuclear power plant.

The loaded vessels were cleared to depart from Chornomorsk and Odesa, according to the Joint Coordination Center, which oversees an international deal intended to get some 20 million tons of grain out of Ukraine to feed millions going hungry in Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia.

Ukraine, Russia, Turkey and the United Nations signed the agreements last month to create a 111-nautical-mile sea corridor that would allow cargo ships to travel safely out of ports that Russia's military had blockaded and through waters that Ukraine's military had mined. Implementation of the deal, which is in effect for four months, has proceeded slowly since the first ship embarked on Aug. 1.

Four of the carriers cleared Sunday to leave Ukraine were transporting more than 219,000 tons of corn. The fifth was carrying more than 6,600 tons of sunflower oil and the sixth 11,000 tons of soya, the Joint Coordination Center said.

Three other cargo ships that left Friday passed their inspections and received clearance Sunday to pass through Turkey's Bosphorus Strait on the way to their final destinations, the Center said.

However, the vessel that left Ukraine last Monday with great fanfare as the first under the grain exports deal had its scheduled arrival in Lebanon delayed Sunday, according to a Lebanese Cabinet minister and the Ukraine Embassy.



The Star Helena bulk carrier, centre, makes its way from the port in Odesa, Ukraine, Sunday, Aug. 7, 2022.

Associated Press

The cause of the delay was not immediately clear.

Ukrainian officials were initially skeptical of a grain export deal, citing suspicions that Moscow would try to exploit shipping activity to mass troops offshore or send long-range missiles from the Black Sea, as it has done multiple times during the war. The agreements call for ships to leave Ukraine under military escort and to undergo inspections to make sure they carry only grain, fertilizer or food and not any other commodities. Inbound cargo vessels are checked to ensure they are not carrying weapons.

In a weekend analysis, Britain's Defense Ministry said the Russian invasion that started Feb. 24 "is about to enter a new phase" in which the fighting would shift to a roughly 350-kilometer (217-mile) front line extending from near the city of Zaporizhzhia to Russian-occupied Kherson.

That area includes the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Station which came under fire late Saturday. Each side accused the other of the attack.

Ukraine's nuclear power plant operator, Energoatom, said Russian shelling damaged three radia-

tion monitors around the storage facility for spent nuclear fuels and that one worker was injured. Russian news agencies, citing the separatist-run administration of the plant, said Ukrainian forces fired those shells.

Russian forces have occupied the power station for months. Russian soldiers there took shelter in bunkers before Saturday's attack, according to Energoatom. Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, recently warned that the way the plant was being run and the fighting going on around it posed grave health and environmental threats.

For the last four months of the war, Russia has concentrated on capturing the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine, where pro-Moscow separatists have controlled some territory as self-proclaimed republics for eight years. Russian forces have made gradual headway in the region while launching missile and rocket attacks to curtail the movements of Ukrainian fighters elsewhere.

The Russians "are continuing to accumulate large quantities of military equipment" in a town across the

Dnieper River from Russian-held Kherson, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington think tank. Citing local Ukrainian officials, it said the preparations appeared designed to defend logistics routes to the city and establish defensive positions on the river's left bank.

Kherson came under Russian control early in the war and Ukrainian officials have vowed to retake it. It is just 227 kilometers (141 miles) from Odesa, home to Ukraine's biggest port, so the conflict escalating there could have repercussions for the international grain deal.

The city of Mykolaiv, a ship-building center that Russian forces bombard daily, is even closer to Odesa. The Mykolaiv region's governor, Vitaliy Kim, said an industrial facility on the regional capital's outskirts came under fire early Sunday.

Over the past day, five civilians were killed by Russian and separatist firing on cities in the Donetsk region, the part of Donbas still under Ukrainian control, the regional governor, Serhiy Haidai, reported.

He and Ukrainian government officials have repeatedly urged civilians to evacuate. □

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Ex-rebel takes oath as Colombia president in historic shift

By **MANUEL RUEDA**

Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) —

Colombia's first leftist president was sworn into office Sunday, promising to fight inequality and heralding a turning point in the history of a country haunted by a long war between the government and guerrilla groups.

Sen. Gustavo Petro, a former member of Colombia's M-19 guerrilla group, won the presidential election in June by beating conservative parties that offered moderate changes to the market-friendly economy, but failed to connect with voters frustrated by rising poverty and violence against human rights leaders and environmental groups in rural areas.

Petro is part of a growing group of leftist politicians and political outsiders who have been winning elections in Latin America since the pandemic broke out and hurt incumbents who struggled with its economic aftershocks.

The ex-rebel's victory was also exceptional for Colombia, where voters had been historically reluctant to back leftist politicians who were often accused



President-elect Gustavo Petro smiles during a 'popular and spiritual' inauguration ceremony presided over by local Indigenous groups and feminist activists, in Bogota, Colombia, Saturday, Aug. 6, 2022.

Associated Press

of being soft on crime or allied with guerrillas.

A 2016 peace deal between Colombia's government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia turned much of the focus of voters away from the violent conflicts playing out in rural areas and gave prominence to problems like poverty and corruption, fueling the popularity of leftist parties in national elections.

Petro, 62, has promised to tackle Colombia's social and economic inequalities by boosting spending on anti-poverty programs and increasing investment in rural areas.

He has described U.S.-led antinarcotics policies, such as the forced eradication of illegal coca crops, as a "big failure." But he has said he would like to work with Washington "as equals," building schemes

to combat climate change or bring infrastructure to rural areas where many farmers say coca leaves are the only viable crop.

The incoming president has said Colombia will stop granting new licenses for oil exploration and will ban fracking projects, even though the oil industry makes up almost 50% of the nation's legal exports. He plans to finance social spending with a \$10 bil-

lion a year tax reform that would boost taxes on the rich and do away with corporate tax breaks.

Petro has also said he wants to start peace talks with remaining rebel groups that are currently fighting over drug routes, gold mines and other resources abandoned by the FARC after their peace deal with the government.

"He's got a very ambitious agenda," said Yan Basset, a political scientist at Bogota's Rosario University.

"But he will have to prioritize. The risk Petro faces is that he goes after too many reforms at once and gets nothing" through Colombia's congress.

Eight heads of state attended Petro's inauguration, which was held at a large colonial-era square in front of Colombia's Congress.

Stages with live music and big screens were also placed in parks across Bogota's city center so that tens of thousands of citizens without invitations to the main event could join in the festivities. That marked a big change for Colombia where previous presidential inaugurations were more somber events limited to a few hundred VIP guests. □

Firefighters battle big blaze at Cuba tank farm for 2nd day

By **ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ**

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Cuban firefighters were joined by special teams sent by

Mexico and Venezuela on Sunday as they battled for a second day to control a fire blazing at a big oil tank farm in the western prov-

ince of Matanzas.

The blaze began Friday night when lightning struck a storage tank during a thunder storm, and the fire spread to a second tank early Saturday, triggering a series of explosions, officials have said.

"The mission of the day is to keep the third tank cold," in hopes of preventing the flames from spreading into more of the site, provincial Gov. Mario Sabines said. Most of the fuel held in the tank where the fire initially started was believed to have been consumed, officials said. Authorities said a body found at the site Saturday had been identified as firefighter Juan Carlos Santana, 60. Officials previously said a group of 17 fire-

fighters had gone missing while trying to quell flames, but there was no word if he was one of those.

Conditions were still too dangerous to mount a search for the missing firefighters, officials said.

A total of 122 people were treated for injuries, including five that officials said were in critical condition. The governor said 4,946 people had been evacuated, mostly from the Dubrocq neighborhood, which is next to the Matanzas Supertanker Base in Matanzas city. The facility's eight huge storage tanks hold oil used to fuel electricity generation.

Dense black smoke billowed up from the tank farm and spread westward

more than 100 kilometers (62 miles) to Havana. The Ministry of Science and Technology said Sunday that the cloud contained sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide and other toxic substances.

The disaster comes as Cuba struggles with a severe economic and energy crisis, with frequent power blackouts hitting during a torrid summer. It was unknown how much fuel had been lost to the flames.

Cuba's government had appealed for help Saturday from oil nations, and specialized firefighting teams began arriving with their equipment from Mexico and Venezuela late Saturday. □



A helicopter carrying water flies over the Matanzas Supertanker Base, as firefighters try to quell the blaze which began during a thunderstorm the night before, in Matanzas, Cuba, Saturday, Aug. 6, 2022.

Associated Press

Opening for Port City Aruba project announced officially

Tuesday morning, prime minister of Aruba, Evelyn Wever-Croes together with minister of Tourism, Dangui Oduber and director of Aruba Ports Authority N.V. (APA), Mark Figaroa announced the opening of the Port City Aruba project, that according to them, will benefit the local community with around three thousand jobs.

The prime minister expressed that the government is very happy to announce this project, which they consider important for Aruba. "An announcement with an extremely large economic impact for our country, an impact which will have positive effects for our entire community", she said

On the path to economic recovery, where Aruba has been overcoming the challenges left behind by the Covid-19 pandemic, it can be anticipated that by the end of this year and beginning of 2023, Aruba's economy can reach the level of tourism from before the pandemic, and finances can achieve a surplus once more, like before the pandemic, the premier assured. She said the key to achieve this an more is the diversifying of the economic pillar, which is tourism, and for this, this project has been in preparation for a long time, since 1995.

Minister of Tourism, Dangui Oduber expressed that the process to begin a public tender for this project will start this year, and according to their plans, the project itself will begin in the second trimester of 2023. "It is a project that is meant to be different than all other projects known in Aruba", he said.

The Port City project is to create a beautiful area with high value, that is attractive for development by the sea, and this is the reason, according to the minister, why for many years this and other governments, during the last two decades, sat together



with all stakeholders on the island to think, after market consultations to see where the appetite is to see the development that is necessary for Aruba for the area of Port City.

According to minister Oduber, it was back in 2017 when the first Wever-Croes cabinet put this project as a priority, because they knew what the impact would be on the economy, labor and public finances. In 2018 they presented the concept of the project to the Council of Ministers and received the approval to continue developing the area. At the start of the second Wever-Croes cabinet in coalition with Raiz party, taking into consideration the new coalition partner, and together with APA they had a presentation of the project in order to receive approval of the new constellation of Council of Ministers, in order to continue the work that began in 2017.

To do this, they implemented a project team where all the land that belonged



to the Country of Aruba had to be transferred to Aruba Ports Authority N.V., which had to prepare the parcel and the business plan in order to measure the economic and financial impact for APA, and had to prepare a design of what the project would become.

After this, they held market consultations in order to explore the market and see if the future of the development matched the project in the area. Finally, they set up a new real estate company, under APA, to manage this project.

Right now they are in the final phase, where they have begun preparing all the necessary documents

for a public tender, which they hope will take place this year.

They took into consideration what is important in the first phase, which will be from Bushiri to the roundabout by Wendy's on L. G. Smith Boulevard. They consider that this project must become a 'MIX', where most of the area that is to be developed will be destined for public areas that can be used by the community. For this reason, they thought of seven elements: the first is that Port City has to serve as a gateway, the first impression when tourists arrive at the port. It must also serve as a park where the tourists and the locals meet each other. This is a unique opportunity to de-

velop this whole area, and it will include a boardwalk in the future which will connect the cruise terminal with Bushiri Beach. The experience of water and park must be central in the design, taking into account sustainability and circular economy.

Of the 187,000 square meters available in the area for development, only 43 percent will actually be developed into a Boutique Hotel, Condos, housing, retail and food and beverage; the rest will be destined to public areas with lots of vegetation.

The whole project will take about 15 to 20 years, and right now they will begin with the first phase, where 40 percent of the project needs to be paid by the developer who wins the public tender, and the income generated will be invested by APA in the area.

The project is an investment of almost one billion florins from the public sector, and the income generated will be invested back into maintenance. When the project is operational, it will have an economic contribution of around 4.5 percent to Aruba's economy, and per year, it is expected to generate 40 million florins for the government. The businessplan when the project is completed contains three thousand jobs, according to minister Oduber.

Director of APA, Mark Figaroa commented that currently they are in a modernization process, changing the structure from an operational to a commercial company, and right now, they depend mainly on income from cruise tourism and shipping. "These are the only two main sources of income on which APA depends, and based on this, we are looking for ways to begin diversifying and creating other sources of income for APA. I believe that Port City is one of the projects that will help us reach our goals", he said. □



Bowls Noodle Bar invites you to a Happy Hour with a unique flavor

Bowls Noodle Bar recently opened at their new location at The Village, near the High Rise Hotels. To celebrate, they are launching their new Happy Hour from 9pm to 11pm every day.

Before the pandemic, Bowls Noodle Bar opened at the Hyatt by the airport, and was in the process of opening a second location at The Village when the pandemic hit. Due to the consequences of the pandemic, they decided to close the restaurant by the airport and open their new location at The Village. Their new location has been open for about six months to great results.



Origin

The founders of Bowls Noodle Bar, Dexter Moreno and his partner Lai, opened their first location on Curaçao. They traveled to Japan to study Japanese Cuisine, and they fell in love with Japanese soup. Lai's parents are Chinese, and this is the start of the Asian-fusion flavors that are both surprising and delectable, combining Japanese, Chinese and even some Korean cuisine. Chef Warren was trained in these traditional flavors by the founders themselves.

They came to Aruba where Dexter approached some ex-colleagues in the industry to open a location on the island, and with a local team, opened Bowls Noodle Bar Aruba with a more extensive menu.

At The Village, night time is the best time. This is why they are now offering a daily Happy Hour, from 9pm to 11pm. It includes \$3 beer and \$5 cocktails.

Their cocktails are made in-house with a unique fusion of Asian flavors, for example, the popular purple Ube Mojito, with the flavor of traditional Ube, a Japanese dessert; the Blue Samurai with ginger flavor; and the refreshing Fruity Blossoms, with a flavor encompassing the Sakura, the famous Japanese Cherry Blossoms. You can try all these for only \$5 each during Happy Hour.

Fusion is at the core of the unique flavors of Bowls Noodle Bar, and this is expressed beautifully in their traditional Japanese soups. They are the only restaurant in Aruba that has most of the noodles traditionally used, Udon, Ramen, and Rice noodles. Ramen noodles, served fresh, are a surprising flavor for those who are used to dried ramen noodles. They also have Jasmine rice for the rice bowls.

Their authentic soups are the highlight and star. Chef Warren explains that there are four main components to the soup: the broth, the noodles, tare, and the oil, and these are very important for the traditional Japanese soups. At Bowls Noodle Bar, they have a wide variety of flavors to cater to every taste, like the famous Pork Chashu. It comes with fresh ramen noodles, and it's the pride of Bowls Noodle Bar. Chef Warren says that the broth for this soup takes two to three days to make, and is made in-house, with fresh and delicious ingredients. They also cater to vegetarians and vegans, with various options on the menu like tofu mushroom soup, vegetable gyoza, wonton, and fresh kimchi fermented at the restaurant.

The wok concept also allows you to create your own unique dish, choosing your base, protein, vegetables and sauce.

Opening hours are Monday to Thursday 5pm – 11:30pm; Friday and Saturday 5pm – 12pm; and Sunday 5pm – 11:30pm. Come visit for great atmosphere, delicious flavors, and a Happy Hour to remember! ☐





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Extreme heat advisory for Aruba

Oranjestad- the Meteorological Department of Aruba issued an extreme heat advisory on August 31, 2022.

We are approaching the hottest season with temperatures higher than usual, namely the months of September, and October. Factors like high temperatures and humidity in combination with a light breeze may cause discomfort.

Temperatures can range from 34 degrees Celsius (93 f) to 36 degrees Celsius (97 f). The humidity varies be-

tween 85% - 90% or more will contribute to a daily heat index of 40 degrees Celsius (104°F) to 46 degrees Celsius (115°F). The heat and humidity will not decrease significantly at night and will only reach a minimum of 28 degrees Celsius (82°F) or 29 degrees Celsius (84°F). This extreme heat is a high-risk factor for people that do not have proper shelter to maintain themselves cool and refreshed.

Excessive heat is the number one weather-related cause of fatalities, therefore people must prepare

for the dangers caused by extreme heat. Children, the elderly, and heart patients are most at risk. Please limit outdoor physical activity to the early hours of the day or after sunset. It is advisable to use air conditioning, fans, or to open windows to let the breeze circulate.

An excessive heat advisory means that one can expect an extreme heat period. Exposure to high temperatures and humidity can make you sick. Extreme heat can cause dehydration, sunstroke, high blood pressure, headache, tired-



ness, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramps, and even strokes after prolonged exposure.

You can take the following measures to avoid getting sick from extreme heat:

Drink a lot of liquid (water or fruit juice with no sugar) during the upcoming days; Stay in an air-conditioned room; Stay out of the sun; Wear light, preferably white clothes. ☐

Prepaid High-Speed Internet anywhere on the island

Are you in Aruba for "Workation" and need high-speed Internet anywhere at any time? SETAR, Aruba's biggest telecom provider, offers you the fastest wireless Internet plans on an LTE network.

Work remotely on the beach via your tablet, laptop, or smartphone and enjoy faster upload and download speeds. SETAR Prepaid Wireless Broadband offers you a lower latency rate, meaning websites loads faster, YouTube does not pause

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Visit SETAR Teleshop with locations around the island or at the airport to check your Mi-Fi SIM or device. ☐

UNESCO Aruba is preparing to host the MOWLAC Regional Conference in November 2022

ORANJESTAD - Aruba will host the Memory of the World Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (MOWLAC) in November 2022.

Recently, the Minister of Culture Xiomara Maduro met with Ms. Marushka Tromp and Mr. Peter Scholing of the National Committee of UNESCO in Aruba to learn more about the preparations to host this conference. Since 1992, UNESCO has been promoting and coordinating the Memory of the World (MOW) program that preserves and makes accessible essential documents and digital heritage to all people worldwide. This program aims to prevent historical documents from disappearing from humankind's collective memory through war, social unrest, lack of resources, sabotage, illegal trade, and destruction. For the Latin American and Caribbean region, a committee called MOWLAC will oversee this program.

In Aruba, the National Library of Aruba and the National Archives of Aruba work to preserve Aruba's collective memory. Thanks to the cooperation of the Aruba



National Archives and the Legislation Department, we can be very proud that the National Library also has a digital collection of Aruba's colonial history. It is essential for the preservation of the history of our country, which received very positive attention in the MOWLAC program.

Minister Maduro thanks the National Committee of Aruba for their tireless work to make Aruba a worthy host of the MOWLAC conference in November.

More information about MOWLAC is available at: <http://mowlac.org/en/about-mowlac/>. You may find information on the digital colonial history of Aruba at <https://archive.org/details/BNA-DIG-PB-1816-1851>. ☐

Attractions and Sightseeing locations in Aruba

ORANJESTAD — There are enough sightseeing locations on the island to fill up a month-long vacation. Aruba's beaches are a big attraction, and although it's great to spend long days just relaxing on the beach and listening to the ocean, there are also plenty of opportunities to get to know Aruba's most attractive sights, historical and natural attractions, and museums. Check out these attractions you don't want to miss!

Blue Horses in Downtown, Oranjestad

This series of 8 sculptures were created by native Aruban artist Osaira Muyale. She named the project Paarden Baai, which translates to "Horse Bay". The statues were installed in 2015 and pay homage to the rich history of Aruba's horse trading industry. In the 17th Century Aruba was used by many countries (Europe, South America, Caribbean islands, and the Mediterranean) as a trading post. The most popular being cattle and horse trading. Horses were once the most important sources of livelihood for Aruba.



For 4 centuries the horse and cattle trade ran strong. At any given

time Aruba was home to herds of thousands of horses that roamed the island. Aruba being the perfect trading post encouraged an extremely diverse culture and is the reason almost all Arubans speak more than 1 or 2 languages.

Theresita church in San Nicolas to the grotto, where a mass is performed. The grotto is located roadside and can be visited daily. Just make sure you park safely in the event you wish to stop for pictures at this location.



Each of the 8 bright royal blue horses is unique and carries its own name and personality. Pictured above is the mare Sinforosa, but you can also find Saturnina, Escapia, Rosalina, Eufrosina, Ambrosio, Bonifacia, and Celestina. The sculptures embody strength, nobility, grace, beauty and freedom. They represent the historical moment where the horses jumped from the ship decks into the Caribbean and swam to the Aruban Bay.

When you visit Aruba be sure to explore downtown Oranjestad and try to find all 8!

The Lourdes Grotto

Named in commemoration of the famous French religious landmark, was created under the guidance of a priest named "Erkamp" and parishioners in the year 1958. The grotto, a shrine built into the rocks is located in Seroe Preto, just off the main road to San Nicolas.

A statue of the Virgin Mary, weighing 700 kilos, was hoisted into place in the grotto. Every year, on February 11 (feast of Lady of Lourdes), a procession leaves from the St.

Bubali Bird Sanctuary

Watch more than 80 species of migratory birds from the Bubali watch tower, overlooking their resting and breeding area. The observation tower allows birdwatchers to get a true birds' eye view. Migratory birds, looking for lush vegetation in which to nest, find an oasis within the Bubali Bird Sanctuary. The nearby water treatment facility empties into two inter-connected man-made bird ponds. Birds that inhabit the sanctuary include herons, egrets, gulls, skimmers, coots, ducks and more. Located within walking distance of the Palm Beach resorts, the Bubali Bird Sanctuary offers some unique bird watching opportunities. You can't miss it as it is located just in front of the historical Old Dutch Windmill. Make sure to bring your camera as many of these birds will randomly fly by the observation tower giving a little show. This is a great place to bring kids for a unique and possibly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be so close to the untamed.

The happiest island in the Caribbean is so much more than just sun, sand and sea. ☐



Alliance Française Aruba donated books to the National Library



Focused on the importance of learning foreign languages, Alliance Française Aruba made a donation of books to the National Library of Aruba, which was named "French Corner Collection".

President of the organization, Erick Vinck expressed that they made a symbolic delivery of some books, because for a while already they see that the amount of books in French language is small, and as a show of gratitude for the cultural and linguistic cooperation that they received from the National Library, they donated books, considered as a nice gesture.

They donated to the National Library 40 books in French, in various levels including children, young adults, and adults, Vinck commented.

The reason behind this is for members of the Aruban community who have an interest in French language can go to the National Library and use the books. He considers that because of geographic and ethnic exchange, many countries use the French language,

and its citizens have migrated to other countries, making French a more popular language alongside English and Spanish.

Vinck mentioned that members of Alliance Française Aruba automatically become members of the National Library of Aruba as well. He also said that since two years ago they have been offering basic French lessons; in the European system they use the reference frame of levels A, B and C, and in Aruba they have been implementing levels A1 and A2. They are organizing level B, which is considered basic courses, although it doesn't mean that the person cannot speak French. "With A2 level the person can speak French, and our focus is really on the practice and speaking of French", Vinck said.

He also commented that there are people who already completed the courses offered, but the focus was different, as it was more international. Back then, it was based on what can be done internationally, but in Aruba, the culture



is different, which means that 80 percent of more of the participants are learning French as a hobby or to improve their language skills.

A few days ago, diplomas were handed which show how Alliance Française Aruba has been developing with these courses, which have a recognized level, and the levels vary according to the material covered and if the course is going to begin at the basics. There are some courses

only for speaking and they are based on the grammar that was already covered in level A.

Alliance Française is an international organization with the goal of promoting French language and culture all around the world. It was founded in 1883 by a group which had amongst its members the scientist Louis Pasteur.

Its original name was Alliance Française pour la propagation de la langue

nationale dans les colonies et à l'étranger (French Alliance for the propagation of the national language to the colonies and abroad), and now it is known as Alliance Française, with the main goal of teaching French as a second language all around the world.

Its main base is situated in Paris. In 2014, Alliance Française had 850 centres in 137 countries on all continents. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 42 Group of top players
 - 6 Singer Nick
 - 11 City on the Mohawk River
 - 12 Rust, for one
 - 13 Intended stop
 - 15 Prologue
 - 17 Crude abode
 - 19 Sheltered side
 - 20 Contrived
 - 23 Perfect place
 - 25 Royal address
 - 26 Phalanges
 - 28 Pooch pest
 - 29 Mum
 - 30 "For sure!"
 - 31 Service reward
 - 32 Coral island
 - 33 City on the Rio Grande
 - 35 Take it easy
 - 38 Twist, e.g.
 - 41 Blow away
- DOWN**
- 1 Total
 - 2 Salt Lake City player
 - 3 Phone sounds
 - 4 Skin woe
 - 5 Merchant of music
 - 6 Foster of film
 - 7 Plow pullers
 - 8 Tiny taste
 - 9 Commotion
 - 10 Harden
 - 16 Old letter opener
 - 17 Peeved and showing it
 - 18 Practical
 - 20 They're found among needles
 - 21 Game spot
 - 22 Irritable
 - 24 Links org.
 - 25 Musical note
 - 27 Like humans
 - 31 Govern-ment income
 - 33 Take it easy
 - 34 Poll numbers
 - 35 Galloped Under bird
 - 37 Young fellow
 - 39 Manx, e.g.
 - 40 Print units

S	C	A	N	T		R	O	S	A
H	A	T	E	R		S	O	P	H
A	R	I	S	E		K	A	R	A
R	E	S	T		T	I	R	A	D
I	F	S		A	W	L		H	E
F	O	U	R	F	O	L	D		
	R	E	E	F		S	O	C	K
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D	U	E		R	U	T		V	I
I	N	V	A	D	E		B	E	N
S	C	O	P	E		B	A	R	G
C	A	K	E	D		A	R	M	O
S	P	E	D		T	E	E	N	S

Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10
11						12				
13						14				
		15			16					
17	18			19				20	21	22
23			24			25				
26						27				
28					29					
30				31				32		
			33				34			
35	36	37				38			39	40
41						42				
43						44				

9-8

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

9-8

CRYPTOQUOTE

I R P P I G S H S Q P W D P E T P B G

S U Z D P E T T U G B G W F P W C S

Z S D Y U D P E W T Y O G A G L S E I G

K R S K O Y G T Z V W P A S A T D Y I U ' K

R Y W Y U X . — E U C U P F U

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: A BIRD DOES NOT SING BECAUSE IT HAS AN ANSWER; IT SINGS BECAUSE IT HAS A SONG. — MAYA ANGELOU

Rents are starting to come down, but the trend may not hold

By ADRIANA MORGA

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Rents are starting to come down after spiking to record levels this past summer, but experts are uncertain if the slowdown will continue.

Christopher Mayer, professor of real estate at Columbia Business School, said people looking for an apartment now might have a better experience than they did in May or June.

"We're not seeing rents go up as quickly, the rental market is softening a little bit," he said.

The national median asking rent was up 14% in July over July the previous year, the smallest annual increase since November 2021, according to a new report from Redfin. While that percentage is still high, it has decreased from 15% in June and 16% in May. Experts say the market could slow further toward the end of the year, but there's still a lot of uncertainty.

"I would not be surprised if we get to 2023 before things really get back to normal," said Brian Carberry, senior managing editor of Rent.com, an apartment search website owned by Redfin.

Much depends on where you live. Cities in Florida such as Boca Raton and West Palm Beach have seen rents decrease -0.1% and -0.5% respectively compared to last month. But according to Apartment List, rents in California coastal cities such as San Diego have continued to increase over the past year.

In Rochester, New York, rent was up 15.3% in August over the same month the previous year, according to data from Apartment List.

An average two-bedroom apartment in the Rochester area was \$1,318 in August, compared with \$1,116 a year ago.

Bank of America CEO Brian Moynihan said high rents are a concern because they can account for a big chunk of a household's take-home pay.



A 'Now Leasing' sign hangs off an apartment building staircase in southeast Portland, Ore., on Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2021.

Associated Press

"Gas prices are coming back down, but rents are going up 10, 12, 15%. And rent can end up taking 40% of these households' income," Moynihan said in a recent Associated Press interview.

While things are looking a bit better for renters than a few months ago, it's still a landlords' market, Mayer said.

If your lease is up, staying put and negotiating with your landlord might be a better option than trying to move, at least until the rental market slows down further, said Paula Munger, assistant vice president for industry research and analysis at the National Apartment Association.

"When you renew your lease, you're definitely not paying the same as someone new moving in," Munger said. "If you can, stay in your apartment."

A major reason for rent spikes has been increasing demand from people priced out of a booming housing market. That market is starting to slow, which could mean more people can afford to buy and won't need to rent, but with interest rates rising, some may not want to take on mortgages.

"With inflation now all throughout the market, there's not enough supply so the prices are going up," Munger said. "That's the downside for people, just not having enough options and choices for what they would like in a housing unit."

That was the experience of Erika Tascon, a 22-year-old Los Angeles resident who was living with roommates but wanted to find an apartment with her boyfriend.

After visiting more than 10 units, the couple picked a 500-square-foot one-bedroom apartment in Beverly Hills where they pay \$2,750 per month. The median rent for a one-bedroom in the area is \$2,773, up 14% from last year, according to data from Zumper.

"I think landlords are taking advantage of tenants right now," said Tascon, who is paying \$200 more per month than for her previous apartment.

In Britni Eseller's case, the high demand meant that she had to rush to fill out her application to beat the other 10 people who toured the apartment she wanted.

"Because everyone is in scarcity mode, you're willing to find a place that might be somewhat affordable and you're unfortunately okay with over-looking chipped floors or a broken appliance," said Eseller, who lives in North Park, a neighborhood of San Diego.

Developers have ramped up construction of apartment buildings this year, which could eventually help to ease the crunch. But it's likely to take a while before that's reflected in the market.

Meanwhile, high rents are disproportionately hurting low-income residents across the country, said Ben Martin, research director of Texas Housers, a non-profit organization that works on housing justice. □

U.K.: 'Early signs' that monkeypox outbreak may be peaking

By MARIA CHENG
AP Medical Writer

LONDON (AP) — British health authorities said Friday the monkeypox outbreak across the country may be peaking and that the epidemic's growth rate has slowed.

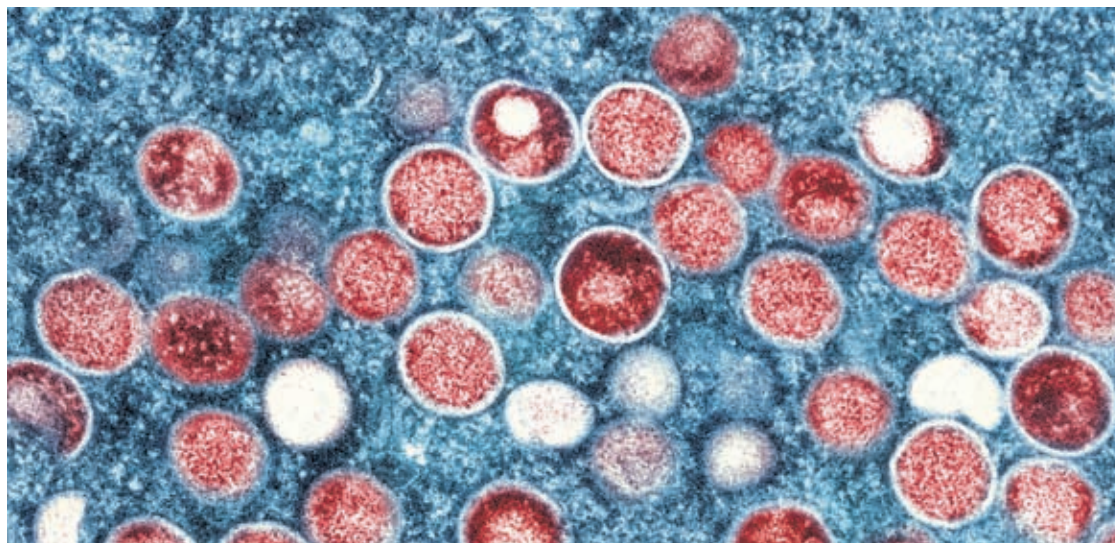
The U.K.'s Health Security Agency said in a statement there were "early signs that the outbreak is plateauing," with 2,859 cases detected since May. No deaths have been reported. Last month, authorities estimated the outbreak was doubling in size about every two weeks, but the number of new infections has dropped in recent weeks.

"While the most recent data suggest the growth of the outbreak has slowed, we cannot be complacent," said Dr Meera Chand, Director of Clinical and Emerging Infections at the Health Security Agency. She said anyone who thought they might have monkeypox should skip meeting friends, social gatherings, and avoid sexual contact.

The Health Security Agency said its most recent analysis of the outbreak "shows that monkeypox continues to be transmitted primarily in interconnected sexual networks of gay, bisexual, or men who have sex with other men." More than 70% of the U.K.'s cases are in London.

British officials noted a small number of infections among women, but said there was not enough evidence to suggest there was sustained spread of monkeypox beyond gay and bisexual men; 99% of all cases in the U.K. are in men.

Scientists who analyzed monkeypox viruses in the U.K. noted a number of mutations compared to viruses circulating in Africa, but said there was no evidence those genetic changes made monkeypox any more transmissible. Experts suspect the monkeypox outbreaks in North America and Europe may have originated in Africa long before the disease



This image provided by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) shows a transmission electron micrograph of monkeypox particles found within an infected cell, cultured in the laboratory that was captured and color-enhanced at the NIAID Integrated Research Facility (IRF) in Fort Detrick, Md.

started spreading via sex at two raves in Spain and Belgium.

The World Health Organization said this week that 92% of monkeypox cases beyond Africa were likely infected through sex and its Director-General recently appealed to vulnerable gay and bisexual men to consider reducing their sexual partners "for the moment."

To date, more than 26,000 monkeypox cases have been reported in nearly 90 countries, with a 19% increase in the last week.

In June, British authorities expanded their vaccination strategy, offering vaccines not only to health workers treating monkeypox patients and high-risk contacts of patients, but to some men who are gay

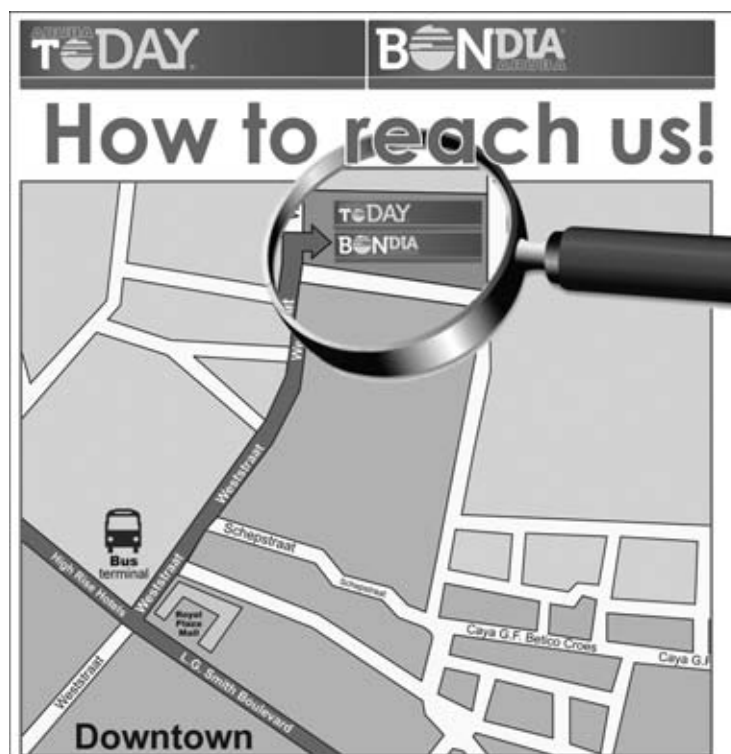
or bisexual and at high risk of catching the virus, including those with multiple sexual partners or who participate in group sex.

Last month, the U.K. downgraded its assessment of the monkeypox outbreak and dropped a recommendation for the contacts of monkeypox cases to isolate for three weeks unless they have symptoms. The change was prompted by data showing that only a small number of contacts are ultimately sickened by monkeypox and a lack of evidence that the disease spreads without close, intimate or sexual contact.

On Thursday, the U.S. declared its outbreak of monkeypox to be a national emergency, WHO designated it a global emergency last month.

Monkeypox spreads when people have close, physical contact with an infected person's lesions, their clothing or bedsheets. Most people recover without needing treatment, but the lesions can be extremely painful and more severe cases can result in complications including encephalitis and death. □

Associated Press



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San Nicolas

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del Pueblo Tel. 582 1253

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'CoComelon' grows to include speaking characters, live tour

By ALICIA RANCILIO

Associated Press

One of Netflix's most popular children's series, "CoComelon," a giggly, musical series with repetitive lyrics, dropped a new special on Monday, providing many parents, like Arinze Odira, of Windsor, Ontario, a reprieve.

"I had a lot of stuff I wanted to do and my wife was sleeping," explained Odira, whose daughter, Keine, is 13 months. "I put 'CoComelon' on and she was there for almost three hours. I had the time to do everything I wanted to do."

Odira was so thankful, he took to Twitter to share his thanks: "To the producers of 'CoComelon,' I owe you guys a bottle of whiskey. Thank you for helping millions of parents around the world." It may not be as flashy or as high-profile as Netflix's adult programming, such as "Bridgerton" or "The Crown," but "CoComelon" is an important show for the streaming service. Besides the U.S., it's hit the top 10 in countries including the UK, Philippines, Canada and South Africa.



This image released by Netflix shows characters, from left, Bingo, YoYo, JJ and TomTom from "CoComelon."

"CoComelon" and Netflix also plan to go big in 2023 by releasing a new series called, "CoComelon Lane" where the characters speak. Episodes will be set up by main character JJ, a toddler with a tiny curl of hair on the top of his head and two teeth.

"He talks directly to camera, so he talks to the kid at home. It really feels like he's inviting you into a playdate with him and his friends. He's asking you to come

with him on whatever his journey of the day is," said Heather Tilert, Netflix's preschool content executive, who says "CoComelon Lane" is targeted for children a little bit older.

"Cocomelon is really hoping to continue with kids who have fallen in love with JJ and friends already and kind of move with them through their development. So, 'CoComelon Lane' we see as really kind of for 3 to 5-years-olds."

The new hourlong special released this week, called "Fun with Family and Friends," consists of 20 new musical animated shorts. It's the first "CoComelon" content exclusively available on Netflix. They've upped their music game too, licensing songs parents will recognize including "Twist and Shout" and "Stand by Me," but touching on skills for reaching pre-school milestones including colors, shapes, movement and

even emotions.

"CoComelon" was originally created in 2005 by Jay Jeon, a father in California who had the idea to use songs to teach his own two kids. He began uploading the videos to YouTube. Those videos eventually grew to gain billions of views and "CoComelon" was acquired by Moonbug Entertainment in 2020.

It's expanded the franchise with spin-offs, a podcast on Spotify and a new live tour called "CoComelon Live!" kicking off Sept. 16 in Baltimore.

Tapping into exactly what makes "CoComelon" so popular with kids is "the big question," said Andy Yeatmen, Moonbug's managing director of Americas, but he thinks it is due in large part to putting the child first rather than going over kids' heads to entertain parents.

"Everything is very thoughtful about being from a preschooler's point of view. So, not what an adult would think about as important to a 3-year-old, but what a 3-year-old would think is important." □



Danny DeVito, right, and his daughter, Lucy, attend the premiere of "The Comedian" during the 2016 AFI Fest at the Egyptian Theatre on Nov. 11, 2016, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

By JANET McCONNAUGHEY
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — An animated horror comedy featuring Danny DeVito as the voice of Satan is "clearly evil," says a Republican congressman from Louisiana whose Facebook post denouncing "Little Demon" had reached millions of people by Tuesday morning.

U.S. Rep Mike Johnson objected to the sitcom aired by FX Networks. Its website says the series is about a woman and her 13-year-old daughter who are trying to live normal lives even though Satan is the girl's father and wants custody of her soul.

A trailer for the show, which airs its fourth episode late Thursday, played during

U.S. Rep: Sitcom with Danny DeVito as voice of Satan is 'evil'

Sunday night's TV broadcast of Louisiana State University's football opener against Florida State.

"I couldn't get to the remote fast enough to shield my 11-year-old from the preview, and I wonder how many other children were exposed to it — and how many millions more will tune in to the new series, owned and marketed by DISNEY," the congressman and vice chairman of the House Republican Conference wrote on Monday. FX Networks and Hulu, where the show is streamed, are among entertainment assets that Disney bought from Fox in a stock deal worth about \$52.4 billion in late 2017.

On the show, DeVito voices the role of Satan and his daughter, Lucy DeVito, plays Satan's daughter,

Chrissy the Antichrist. Aubrey Plaza plays the mother. New episodes are broadcast at 10 p.m. Thursdays on FXX.

Disney and FX Networks did not immediately respond on Tuesday to emails requesting comment.

Johnson posted on Tuesday that more than 6.1 million people have read his earlier post — more, he said, than watched Sunday's game, "which the latest ratings say dominated Sunday night TV with 5.87 million total viewers."

He had written online Monday: "Our job as parents is to guard the hearts and minds of our kids. This culture has become alarmingly dark and desensitized and this is not a game. Disney and FX have decided to embrace and market what is clearly evil. STAY FAR FROM IT."

Although many people thanked Johnson for the post and talked about boycotting Disney, many others disagreed with Johnson's assessment. Some noted that "Little Demon" was made for and marketed to adults. Children should be in bed by 10 p.m., some wrote. Others said people opposed to the show's existence are trying to make networks shelter their children when that's a job for parents.

Johnson responded on Tuesday in a Facebook message and tweet that also were linked to from his House webpage.

"Free speech is an important principle, and in this country, everyone can obviously make their own decisions about what media they and their families consume," he wrote. □

Tiafoe beats Rublev; 1st U.S. man in U.S. Open SF in 16 years

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**

AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Frances Tiafoe became the first American man to reach the U.S. Open semifinals since 2006 by beating Andrey Rublev 7-6 (3), 7-6 (0), 6-4 behind the backing of a boisterous partisan crowd in Arthur Ashe Stadium on Wednesday.

The 24-year-old Tiafoe, who grew up in Maryland, put on a performance just as strong, if not stronger, than the one he used to eliminate 22-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal in the fourth round.

"Man, man, this is wild. This is crazy. Had the biggest win of my life 24 hours ago. ... That's huge growth. it's tough to turn the page," said Tiafoe, who is seeded 22nd at Flushing Meadows. Then, looking ahead, and making sure everyone knows this big milestone is not enough to satisfy him, Tiafoe said: "Let's enjoy this one. We've got two more, guys. We've got two more."

Andy Roddick was the last U.S. man to get to the semifinals in New York, when he lost to Roger Federer in the title match 16 years ago. Roddick also was the last man from the country to win any Grand Slam singles championship, taking the 2003 U.S. Open.

Tiafoe's first career Grand Slam semifinal will come Friday against No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz or No. 11 Jannik



Frances Tiafoe, of the United States, reacts after defeating Andrey Rublev, of Russia, during the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2022, in New York.

Associated Press

Sinner.

Tiafoe played aggressive, offensive tennis and used 18 aces along with strong volleying to oust No. 9 Rublev, a Russian who dropped to 0-6 in major quarterfinals. Tiafoe won 31 of 41 points when he went to the net; Rublev only ventured forward 11 times.

In the women's quarterfinals Wednesday, No. 6 Aryna Sabalenka earned a second consecutive trip to the final four at Flushing Meadows with a 6-1, 7-6 (4) victory over Karolina Pliskova.

"I'm ready for it," Sabalenka said. "I'm ready for another fight."

Sabalenka's next opponent will be No. 1 Iga Swi-

atek or No. 8 Jessica Pegula, who were scheduled to play each other Wednesday night.

Pegula is the last player from the United States in the women's bracket.

Rain drops began falling just before the start of Tiafoe vs. Rublev, so they stood around waiting for the retractable roof to be shut. That resulted in both a cool, wind-free environment and a louder setting, with applause and yells from fans reverberating in what became an indoor arena — circumstances that favored Tiafoe.

The match featured dominant serving by both — the only break of serve came more than two hours in,

when Tiafoe went ahead 4-3 in the third set, then stood mostly motionless on court, enjoying the reaction from the stadium — and the most vital moments were the two tiebreakers. Tiafoe is now 6-0 in tiebreakers at this U.S. Open. He excelled at that stage against Rublev, playing to the spectators and enjoying the crescendos of cheers that mirrored the way he lifted his performance.

Rublev actually had the first chance to nose ahead, with a set point at 6-5 in the first, but Tiafoe erased it with a risky forehand to a corner that drew a netted reply.

Several minutes later, it was

Tiafoe who took the set, sealing it with a 130 mph ace, then strutting to the changeover, nodding and motioning with his racket for more noise. The audience obliged, included Tiafoe's pal, Washington Wizards All-Star guard Bradley Beal, from his front-row seat.

A similar scene played out in the second tiebreaker after a drop volley by Tiafoe forced a mistake by Rublev to make it 6-0.

When Tiafoe produced a backhand return winner to seal a two-set lead, he sprinted to the sideline, sat down near his messy collection of towels, shirts and socks spread out around the ground — call it "college dorm room chic" — and shook his fist amid the delirium of a standing ovation.

Tiafoe is definitely a showman. He demonstrated that against Nadal, then again against Rublev, who never tried to hide his anger at the way things were going.

Rublev would hit himself in the leg with his racket or punched his strings. Over and over, he gesticulated and yelled toward his guest box, where only four of the 15 seats were occupied, quite a contrast to Tiafoe's packed section.

"I feel so at home on courts like this," Tiafoe told the crowd. "You guys get behind me, I want to play my best." □

Evenepoel safely in Vuelta lead after Roglic withdraws

ARACENA, Spain (AP) —

Remco Evenepoel safely kept his Spanish Vuelta lead on Wednesday after three-time defending champion Primož Roglic withdrew ahead of the 17th stage because of injuries.

Rigoberto Urán, the 35-year-old Colombian from team EF Education-EasyPost, prevailed on the final climb to win the stage and complete his treble of Grand Tour victories after previous stage triumphs in the Tour de France and

Giro d'Italia.

"I had been chasing it for many years," Urán said. "When you already have victories in the Giro and in the Tour, and now in La Vuelta, as a rider for three-week events, it gives me a lot of happiness. Today is a very special day for me."

He crossed the line two seconds ahead of Quentin Pacher and Jesús Herrada. Marc Soler was 15 seconds back in fourth place.

Roglic didn't start after not recovering from his inju-

ries sustained Tuesday in a crash 75 meters (82 yards) from the finish line while going for the victory in the 16th stage.

The Slovenian from team Jumbo-Visma was seeking an unprecedented fourth straight Vuelta title.

Evenepoel finished in the group of riders who crossed the line five minutes behind Urán. The Belgian cyclist from team Quick-Step Alpha Vinyl maintained a lead of more than two minutes over Enric Mas of team



Belgian Remco Evenepoel of Quick-Step Alpha Viny celebrates on the podium in the red jersey for leader in the overall ranking after the 16th stage during the Vuelta cycling race between San Lucar de Barrameda and Tomares, in Tomares, southern Spain, Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2022.

Associated Press

Movistar. Juan Ayuso was nearly five minutes back in third place.

Roglic was 1 minute, 26 seconds behind Evenepoel before withdrawing. □

Mickelson wins part of the battle, loses the war

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

Much like his style of golf, Phil Mickelson's imagination is only as good as his ability to pull off the shot. Mickelson has a right to feel somewhat vindicated by the bold and rapid changes coming to the PGA Tour. The idea — his idea, he can argue — is for the top players to compete against each other as often as 17 times, maybe more, for an average purse of \$20 million. The question now is whether he lost the war.

Mickelson won't be part of a PGA Tour model he always wanted. His tour membership is not being renewed for this season. His name is the first one listed on an antitrust law-



The sunglasses of Phil Mickelson reflect the second fairway following his tee shot on the second during the first round of the LIV golf tournament, Friday, Sept. 2, 2022, in Bolton, Mass.

Associated Press

suit against the PGA Tour that has created so much animosity. He is as much a face of the Saudi-funded disruption in golf as Greg Norman.

Was he right? Does it matter?

"As much as I probably don't want to give Phil any sort of credit at all, yeah, there were certain

points that he was trying to make," Rory McIlroy said. "But there's a way to go about them. ... He just didn't approach it the right way."

McIlroy spoke of collaboration. Mickelson likes leverage, and he might have relished that as much as the reported \$200 million signing bonus he got from LIV Golf.

Mickelson wouldn't use the word "vindication" in an interview last week with Morning Read on SI.com. This was Mickelson trying to take the high road, a path he prefers only when he suspects he's right.

"All players should be appreciative of what LIV is doing," Mickelson told Morning Read. "The players on LIV for the opportunity they

are getting. And the PGA Tour for the leverage that was provided to get these changes done."

These changes are what Mickelson began preaching some 20 years ago, only then he was more passive than aggressive. Change eventually came in the form of the FedEx Cup, a new model to bring the best players together at the end of the season in a series that culminated with the biggest payoff in golf.

Mickelson wanted more. This was in 2006, long before acronyms like PIP and PIF were part of the golf vernacular.

Lefty grudgingly accepted what he saw as baby steps to his big dreams. Most telling from that January day in 2006 was his admiration for Norman — "A brilliant individual," Mickelson called him — and the Shark's ideas for golf.

All these years later, Mickelson became Norman's chief recruiter and had the leverage he needed — an endless supply of Saudi cash from the Public Investment Fund. That enabled LIV Golf to overpay for a roster of players that includes 10 major champions, five of them still among the top 50 in the world, the other five well past their peak years.

There is no meaning to the LIV tournaments — that takes years. There is no television partner yet, only a broadcast crew that artificially raises the hype and thus raises suspicion about the legitimacy of the product.

Even so, the PGA Tour was forced to respond by catering to the stars. The season will be shorter, the prize money higher, the fields smaller. That was in June. And then Tiger Woods and McIlroy led a private meeting of top players last month who pushed for a model where the elite play together all the time.

Odds are there will be more changes before January. What emerged from that meeting were eyes toward 2024. Next year is a bridge to get there. □

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